

HORSE-RACING,

AND

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE AND DUTY,

INCOMPATIBLE.



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HORSE-RACING.

American Congress, fifty years ago.

The American Congress, soon after the Declaration of Independence, passed the following motion :

“WHEREAS, true religion and good morals are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness:

“*Resolved*, That it be, and hereby is, earnestly recommended to the several States, to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof, and for the suppression of theatrical entertainments, horse-racing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners.”

In the list of public amusements, horse-racing stands prominent. Handed down from ancient times, when the course was used as a gymnasium, or arena, for the training of youth in equestrian exercises, popular taste has degraded this branch of military science into a low and vulgar spectacle.—That people, destitute of religious principles, should patronize “the sports of the turf,” as they are technically called, seems to be congenial with that worldly spirit which is at enmity with God. But, that those who profess the christian name, and particularly christian females, should countenance scenes of riotous concourse, upon which the Divine blessing can-

not rest, betrays a character of religious sentiment, not less contrary to profession of faith, than deplorable in its consequences.

The observation of this melancholy inconsistency calls forth this appeal. It is addressed to Christians on the authority of their baptismal obligations; and, in the spirit of the sacred injunction, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him.—(1. John, 2, 15.)

The concession is readily made, that sportsmen may allege plausible reasons to justify their passion for gaming: nor is it to be wondered at. Every vice, by fallacious argument, may claim some kind of exculpation. The object of this tract, is to expose the imposition which has covered an enormous evil of the kind; and to show that horse-racing, as a public amusement, is absurd, cruel, vicious, demoralizing, adverse to the principles of christianity, and hostile to the best interests of society.

In the first place, horse-racing, as it is generally practised, is by no means a rational amusement. What is the object proposed by it, and what are the means used for its attainment? Of what consequence to thronging spectators is the fact, that one horse is fleetier than another? If celerity of motion be the point of popular attraction, the object could be better obtained by the flight of birds, or by the artificial agencies of gunpowder or steam. The attempt, in either of those last named instances, to traverse a certain distance in a limited time, if not so exciting as that of animal velocity, would have the merit of being harmless in application, and, possibly, might produce results of practical benefit to the useful purposes of life. One, in reason, ought to expect, that the amusement which draws within its vortex, crowds as great as those assembled for the celebration of the national jubilee, or for the canvass of the executive office, should exhi-

bit nothing of popular excitement offensive to refined taste, nor derogatory to the intellectual character of the age. The fact is not to be questioned, that on certain occasions, meetings of the people, when regulated by the restrictions of well organised police, or what is preferable, when governed by the acknowledged etiquette of order and decorum, promote the interests of society, without confounding the marked and wholesome distinctions which compose it. Thus a laudable thirst for knowledge, the desire to witness the application of the principles of art or science, to the comforts and conveniences of life, the patriotic commemoration of some national event, or even the benefit of cheerful exercise, are some of the improved inducements for popular assemblies. But which of those motives influence the promiscuous multitudes at the race-course? What proper feeling can actuate any of the crowd? Is it of consequence, except to gamesters and proprietors, which horse wins or which horse loses? The race then, itself, is of little or no moment to its pretended admirers. And, a greater libel on popular taste cannot be imagined, than the assumption, that thinking people *should* be amused with so paltry a spectacle.

Other causes must be assigned for the thrilling interest which it excites. Avarice, vanity and idleness, with the attendant train of vice, gather the motley witnesses of an exhibition, which has not one redeeming trait to justify or excuse it. The question may properly be asked, is pride the only evil passion of the wealthy, gratified by this display of splendid equipages and liveries? Will the feeling of envy or covetousness, which agitates the minds of those in the humbler walks of life, at the sight of grandeur they cannot hope to emulate, prove a compensation for the loss of time and expense which the sad comparison costs? The mere display of wealth may not seem to be more objectionable in one place than

in another. Whatever are the effects of ostentation elsewhere, this species of vanity within the race-course cannot be harmless. Its direct influence on the passions is to mortify the democratic pride common to the lower orders of people, and to heighten the triumphs gained by the aristocracy of wealth.—Nor is this all: the pomp and splendor, affected by this low ambition, give eclat to a spectacle, which, otherwise, might not be sustained by popular approval. Should not refined taste deprecate the exposure of any passion, at the expense of common sense and humanity?

The question leads to the second proposition, that horse-racing is cruel. It is a matter of notoriety, that, for the trial of speed, horses are trained with peculiar regard to appearance and action. But pampered, and trained as they may be, the utmost effort of veterinary skill, cannot counteract the effects of the excessive labor which they are forced to undergo. When bets are high, competition is great, and the pride or avarice of proprietors is excited, the distressed animals covered with the foam of perspiration, and bleeding under the lash and spur, are drawn onwards to the goal, not of chivalrous fame, but of low and huckstering avarice. It is also well known, that when at full speed, the slightest deviation from the track, may produce disastrous consequences to the horse or rider. And, not unfrequently, accidents from this cause, occur, which terminate in the serious injury, if not death, of one or both.

Sacred wisdom declares the good man to be merciful to his beast. What pleasure should the christian take in the sufferings of the mute creation; and, particularly that portion of it, which ministers so essentially to human comfort?

The cruelty of the race differs only, *in degree*, from that of bull-baiting. But it has not the poor apology in its defence, that proprietors possess the courage

of gladiators, to risk their own lives in the exhibition. Nor can it be said, as of the Spanish tournament, that the sufferings of the noble animal exposed to popular amusement, on the course, are limited to one trial, which must be terminated by a comparatively easy death. Accident, or bad management, as has been already remarked, may produce this result; but avarice, if not humanity, aims to prevent it. The racer is usually kept for the turf two or three years, and sometimes longer, until the effects of exhausted nature give signs of disease or premature age, and the animal becomes what is called entirely broken down.

Advocates of racing, it is true, have denied the *cruelty* of the sport, and appeal for the truth of this denial, to the habits of animals in a state of nature. The appeal is, however, unfortunate. Has the fact been ascertained, that any beast of the forest runs so far, and so fast, as to produce its own injury, except in pursuit of its prey, (and then only when goaded on by the cravings of extreme hunger,) or when endeavoring to escape an enemy? Does the wild horse of the desert, who, Job tells us, "paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength"—(Job, 39, 21)—break himself down, by a voluntary trial of speed against time? Natural history has not, as yet, verified the discovery, that the instinct, and faculties of animals are causes of their self-destruction. Nor has philosophy offered a solitary theory to explain such an incomprehensible anomaly in the providence of the Supreme Being, "whose mercies are over all his works"—(Psalm, 145, 9.)

It is then absurd to allege the natural habits of animals, in justification of horse-racing. As well might the unrestrained gambols of childhood, be contrasted with the severest labors of a galley slave. Experience shows that there is in the analogy, nothing to justify the comparison; and

fact cannot be disproved, that the racer, both in training, as well as in the actual labor of the field, undergoes hardships of almost unmitigated cruelty. Correct moral feeling shrinks from the sight of suffering, except for the purposes of relief or sympathy. Even in public punishments, when for the sake of example, justice enforces the sanctions of violated law, christian sensibility turns from the inspection of wretchedness which pity cannot relieve: what motive, then, can justify the christian patronage of the race? the cruelty of which is excused, not as a necessary evil, not as the preventive of greater mischief to the social compact, not as the means of better security to individual rights and interests; but merely as a source of popular amusement and pleasure.

In the third place horse-racing is vicious. Unfortunately, this kind of sport enlists the patronage of the affluent. Men of wealth, only, can afford the necessary expense. Yet, to indemnify themselves for cost and trouble, large sums are staked upon the issues of the race. There is, however, in those speculations the same risk and uncertainty as those which attend all other games of hazard. The race is not to the swift—(Ec. 9, xi.) Accident, management, and knavery, constitute the many chances against successful competition. Infatuated by this unholy excitement, persons of, in other respects, correct moral principles, do not scruple to take all advantages not forbidden by the rules of their association; and, not unfrequently are guilty of manœuvres in jockeyism, which, if not tantamount to direct swindling, ought, upon every principle of integrity, to be pronounced unfair and dishonorable. A noted example of this fact is matter of history. Every one acquainted with the life and times of George IV. knows, that his dishonorable conduct at a race, when Prince of Wales, caused his expulsion from a society of which he was a member. It is true, that this celebrated personage

was a licentious, and an unprincipled man ; still, one should suppose, that pride of rank would have proved a more effectual protection against the lure of covetousness, and the temptation of avarice. So overwhelming, however, was the gambling propensity, that, for the illegal gratification of it, neither the sacrifice of character, nor the outrage of public opinion was considered more than as dust in the balance. The history of other Jockey Clubs could, at the present time, make similar disclosures of moral turpitude, even among those who palm themselves upon the world as men of sterling honor and integrity. Nor is it the recklessness of *individual* character alone, which calls for rebuke and animadversion. Base men and hypocrites are found in all the walks of life, not even excluding the pale of the sanctuary. But it is the *system* of gaming, and the evil passions which it inflames, that sanctions nefarious practices equivalent to acts of felony ; and repugnant to the loosest sentiment of wordly justice and probity. This source of vice is prolific and contagious. Immense sums are lost and won at a race. By its reverse of fortune, men of wealth are ruined. The poor squander the hard earnings of daily labour, the loss of which must be felt in the deprivation of some domestic comfort or convenience. A decided permission is thus given, by general usage, to a very desperate infatuation.— Females, in other respects sensitive to the proprieties of life, bet trifles upon a favorite steed. Children stake their pocket money on the issue of the race ; and the general impression prevails, that gaming, of some kind or other, is not only in keeping with the amusement which it supports, but is very necessary to produce the interest and admiration of the populace.

It is somewhat remarkable, that the Legislature of this State should impose penal restraints upon gaming, as a vice which tends to corrupt the morals of

youth. Those special enactments refer, by documentary evidence, to tippling shops, and places of resort, from which the stigma of infamy, and the natural disgust of vulgar associates would of themselves tend to repel the young, of virtuous parentage, and ordinary moral culture. But the statute makes no specification of the race-course, sustained expressly by gaming *on a large scale*; and rendered fascinating and dangerous from the high standing of its patrons in society. The intent of the legal provision accords, it must be acknowledged, with the usage of mankind, which allots to ignominious punishment, the solitary act of homicide, and crowns with the laurels of fame, the avowed enemy of the race, who has, in the career of ambition, slain his thousands and his tens of thousands. A bye-law in the penal code this, which, however congenial to popular sentiment, does not exhibit any profundity of legislative discrimination.—Were the effects of the race simply to draw from the pockets of the few, treasures which should circulate among the many, the loss of the one would be regarded as the benefit of the other party. But the operation of this exchange is not viewed, by those interested, in so philosophical a view. The greater may be the success, so much greater the desire will be to accumulate. On the contrary, repeated losses only provoke anxiety to retrieve them. Thus, step by step the gamblers are led on to cherish that selfish spirit, which engenders envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Our knowledge of human nature enables us to assert, that the influence of disordered passions is not limited to the scene where they may be first forced into operation. Opportunities will be made to give them vent. And the failure of the brilliant scheme of iniquity leads the moral bankrupt to the pursuit of cheaper infamy.

From this course alone, the race-course must be polluted ground. Its atmosphere is infectious. Take

a bird's eye view of the scene. Contemplate the splendid throng of wealth and fashion where thousands are squandered on the struggle of the palpitating and bleeding horse. Envy throws from the magic circle a withering glance at some more brilliant equipage. Covetousness inflames with hopes, or fears, the veteran gamester's heart. And we are assured that pride of character can scarcely draw a veil over the triumphs and mortification thus brought into collision.

This is not all. Fill up the outlines of the sketch. Enter the booth or tent, where the same passions are exhibited, in low life, by the dense mass of infamous characters, congregated around each game of hazard, as eagles hovering over their prey. What an awful picture of human nature! There are the hardened reprobates ready, with remorseless talons, to inflict the mortal blow upon the property or reputation of the unsuspecting. There, the shameless daughter of infamy, who forgetteth the guide of her youth, and the covenant of her God. (Prov. 2. 17.) presents the impure cup to the lips of the young man void of understanding. Far and wide the drunkard's glee mingles with the dicer's oath. Christian faith must presume, that the prayers of fifty righteous in the land, have prevailed to still the cries of the divine vengeance on sin; and to arrest the tempest of fire threatening those modern cities of the Plain! In all honesty of purpose, it should be asked, are those scenes of iniquity, places of amusement which the christian mother should indirectly countenance; and where the purity of her daughter's taste might, by the casual observance of vices, unknown to her only in name, be offended, if not contaminated? Should the prudent father introduce his son, at the period of life when impressions are most lasting, to an acquaintance worse than unprofitable with "the evil communications which corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15. 33.) and permit the inexperienced mind, to have the

trials of virtue against which purity of intention may not be proof! Ought the wise and indulgent master allow apprentices, or servants, necessarily of limited education, and under less moral restraint, to witness scenes, and mingle in society, which can neither afford them any rational amusement, nor improve their condition: but which may lead to their temporal and eternal ruin? Horse-racing is then fourthly demoralizing.

Made acquainted, by sad experience, with the operation of this gambling mania; and of its influence upon human passions, the christian observer cannot fail to deprecate its remoter evils, as of more alarming magnitude, than those of direct and immediate consequence. In proof of the observation, the instance may be adduced of the youth carried from the field, seriously hurt in a drunken brawl, or in a state of beastly intoxication. Then imagination may recall with sober fidelity of truth, the consequent sickness of the novice in libertinism: the desperate infatuation felt by him to recover pecuniary losses: the last act of direct suicide, in which the phrensied mind may foolishly seek relief; or the slower, but not less criminal process of dissipated habits, which, sooner or later, consign the ruined spendthrift to a dishonored and an untimely grave! Instances also in point, may be drawn from the conduct of those, who leave their tools in the work-shop, and their ploughs in the furrow, to swell the crowd of idlers on the race-course. Enter at such a time, the dwelling of one of those thoughtless beings, and what a scene of wretchedness may it not present! The mother and her helpless children, perhaps, are destitute of the common necessities of life. An unnatural father has renounced, or forgotten, the strongest tie of social being. Having squandered upon his riots, the substance which might have brought peace and gladness to his domestic circle, he is at length brought home to it, wallowing in drunken-

ness, or in that state of phrenzy, when maddened by ardent spirits and pecuniary loss, he endeavors to silence the remonstrance of conscience by the abuse of his family; and inflicts upon the natural objects of his care, the injustice of harsh usage in addition to the deeper cruelty of bad example. Such illustrations of the vice in question, though by no means uncommon, are not frequently held forth to public condemnation. Distressed families bear such trials in silence. Female prudence, or filial piety endeavors to conceal them from public view. But with all this concealment, enough of a demoralizing action is visible to warrant the assertion, that similar effects of racing are of daily occurrence.

Again. It may be proper to expose the operation of this vicious amusement in its direct and usual influence upon the rising generation. Let us suppose the child of virtuous parents to be introduced to the scenes and acquaintance of a race-course, permit him to become interested in the bets; and of course indifferent to the sufferings of the rival animals: familiarize his mind to the sight of the grossest vices, and thus weaken the restraints of virtue, what must be the conclusion of his reflections? Unable to reconcile parental example with christian principle, will he not be induced to believe, that the ways of the world are preferable to the religion of the gospel? Incapable, by any train of sophistry, to understand the difference between vice on a race-course, and vice any where else, or how the place sanctions there evils then practised, must he not conclude, that the statements of divine denunciations upon iniquity are not true: that the principles of the gospel are not suited to the liberal spirit of the age; that the renunciation of sin and the world, however it may be the necessary component of a baptismal promise, is appropriate only to periods of age, sickness or approaching death: and that the profession

of the christian faith, after all, proves no better than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal! (1 Cor. 13. 1.) If those passing reflections become principles, how can the thinking mind escape the dangerous influence of avowed infidelity! That such is the state of a large majority of the youth of this country, cannot, for a moment be questioned. Other causes no doubt, contribute to increase this calamitous state of irreligion, but the race-course is the deadly fount from which the tributary streams of vice and immorality are disseminated through the nation.

5thly. Horse-Racing is opposed to the principles of christianity.

With what propriety, it may be asked, can christians sanction an amusement, which, independent of its vicious, and demoralizing tendency, recognizes the overruling influence of some unknown power called Chance or Fortune? Is not the acknowledgement of such a principle, directly in conflict with faith in the orderings of divine providence! The standard of christian sentiment, surely cannot tolerate idolatrous sacrifices to the mammon of unrighteousness; nor approve the riotous concourse, where the name of Deity is invoked to sanction fraud, or is used in wanton blasphemy; where no respect is ever showed to the christian sabbath; where the most unblushing vices wait not the shadow of night for perpetration; and where in the spirit, if not the very letter, all the commandments of the Decalogue are broken, as if a penal consequence of the acknowledged violation of the first and last. Upon a similar, although higher principle, than that which renders the man of honor's word his bond, the christian should never voluntarily throw himself into the way of circumstances which might compel the forfeiture of baptismal promises, nor should he court temptations which might produce forgetfulness of the respect due to himself, to society and to the institutes of God. Let him that thinketh

he standeth take heed lest he fall, (1 Cor. 10. 12.) is a maxim justified by daily experience, not less than the inspiration of divine wisdom. To impress the salutary lesson of human weakness on the minds of his followers, the Redeemer taught them to pray against temptation, (Mat. 6. 13.) St. James cautions his brethren of the necessity for divine aid against trials which might be above their strength: and enjoins upon the christian as the peculiarity of consistent profession that he should keep himself pure and unspotted from the world. (James 1. 27.) If the truth were so that race-course scenes presented no temptation of envy, avarice or dissipation to the christian spectator, will not his presence there, be the cause, in some degree, of temptation to others? Can christian taste find any enjoyment in the pleasures of sin? Will not the recollection of them distract the mind in services of the sanctuary; and come to the worshipper, if he present himself at the altar of redeeming love, like flocks of unclean birds to defile the sacrifice which he would offer thereupon? Does ever a sinful world approve the thoughtless inconsistency, which would compound the wicked customs of the age with the holy and self-denying principles of the gospel? Must not the astute infidel penetrate the delusion: attribute to the *system* of christian faith the low standard of individual religious sentiments; and impute to the more consistent conduct of the faithful, either the delusion of fanaticism, or the baseness of hypocrisy? Most unfortunately, it sometimes happens, that those demoralizing games in question, are celebrated, at periods of the year, when the Christian Church commemorates the most solemn events in the history of its religion. During the season of Lent, when the daughter of Zion arrayed in sackcloth, and with ashes on her head, comes to the foot of Calvary; and points to the Saviour of the world expiring on the cross—whilst the household of faith

express penitential wo for the dread sacrifice of sin; and humble gratitude for its atonement—is it meet for the believer to be found at that time, in the ranks of fashion, patronizing the pomps and vanities of this wicked world: or even indulging in pleasures and amusements, which, at other times might be considered innocent and admissible? Even if the low standard of evangelical piety which the question implies, were adopted by those who claim freedom from bigotry and fanaticism, is nothing of defence or of respect, due to the sentiments and feelings of their fellow christians who think and act differently? In the early periods of primitive christianity, when conflicting teachers wished to introduce their favorite customs and opinions into the profession of faith, St. Paul yielded in things indifferent, to the tenderness of his converts' consciences: and always made allowances for the prejudices of education, when such concession did not imply sacrifice of principle, and involve error in doctrine, or viciousness in life. Now if the example of St. Paul, or the commandment of our Saviour, who required his deciples to love one another, should have any influence upon christian character and intercourse, it is not a matter of opinion, but a principle of duty, that believers should sacrifice worldly pleasures to the unity of the faith, and the preservation of the bonds of peace. The well regulated mind must shrink from giving pain, by the participation in any pastime, however otherwise innocent, to the conscientious scruples of those engaged with them in the same enterprise of benevolence. But horse-racing, as has been already shown, is not an innocent amusement. It is a positive injury to christianity, inasmuch as it degrades with some, the high and holy standard of religious sentiment and responsibility to a mere worldly feeling of interest or policy, and opens or others, a floodgate of vice and prodigality. If the professor of religion could believe that his personal

attendance upon scenes confessedly immoral, inflict no wound upon his own purity of heart, does he weigh the effect of distracting thoughts which worldly excitement produces upon his own mind, when in preparation for communion with Heaven: or the influence of his example upon the minds of others disposed to accept the covenant terms of salvation? It is absurd, for men of ordinary passions, to vaunt a philosophical indifference to trials of virtue. Such boasters would do well to recollect the maxim of wisdom, "can a man take hot coals in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned." (Prov. 6. 28.) And it is more idle still to deny the moral agency of example. Every christian has some degree of influence; worldly people avail themselves of observed inconsistency in the professor of religion, to justify their course of ungodliness. That a member of the Church did such an act, or countenanced such a scene, is often alleged as the excuse for others to do the same. The wisdom of the apology is not to be sure, a subject of question. But the remark is proof, that the gospel being recognized as the purest system of morals, requires of its friends correspondent purity and holiness of life: and, of course, the impropriety of their conduct, which, indirectly, creates a suspicion of the gospels' truth, or tends to weaken its influence, is a moral treason against society and God. The evils of bad example are but slightly removed by salutary precept. Parents and masters, who permit their children and domestics to attend the races, are, in fact, responsible for the consequences; unless such persons would take especial pains to use the course as the theme of moral reflection: and to warn the objects of their supervision of the melancholy fruits of this vicious amusement.

Grecian history informs us, that the Spartan noble exhibited to his children the spectacle of an intoxi-

cated slave, to produce on their minds the early disgust of drunkenness. With a similar object in view, the christian guardian of the young might conduct them to the gaming field; and impress on their feelings a timely odium to its attendant libertinism. But this is not the view of duty which christians usually take. Professing no relish for that kind of things; or rather to possess a higher standard of true pleasure, their ordinary reflection is, why not indulge the child and the servant in a holyday; and allow them to enjoy the annual pastime so fascinating to their taste, and so congenial to the spirit of the world. This fascination, however covets the moral danger. Under the attractive show of splendid equipages, prancing steeds, costly dress, and merry countenances, are concealed the weakness of human nature, and the dregs of social life, which ought not to be opened upon the youthful observation without previous warning and admonition. It matters then little, as to the effect of example, whether christians are personally spectators of those games or not, so long as their families are in habitual attendance upon the course. The unavoidable inference upon such a state of things as the supposition implies, would be, that the parent might be induced to absent himself from the polluted ground, by the pressure of worldly business, or to *save appearances*; but that religious principle was not strong enough in domestic authority, to shelter the child or the servant from the almost unavoidable contamination of vicious intercourse.

Lastly, horse-racing is hostile to the interests of society.

As a justification of this amusement, its advocates affirm that by this means, the breed of horses is improved. The fact is not necessarily so. There is no natural connexion between the *trained* fleetness of the racer, and the useful qualities of the ordinary

horse. On the contrary, the best and finest horses in the world, those found in the deserts of Arabia; and of which the celebrated traveller, La Martine, speaks in such enthusiastic praise, are not habituated to coursing as is practised in Europe or the United States. Animals kept for this purpose are useful for no other. But if it were true, that the cost of the imported horse could only be met by the gambling speculation, on which the show of its speed depends, can the question be agitated, whether the policy of country demands the doubtful advantage at the expense of its morality? Better, far better, that the race of the animal, useful as it may be, were extinct; and the people of our day, as were the nobles of the ancient Hebrew commonwealth, be compelled to ride on asses, than that a deluge of irreligion and profligacy should threaten the christian world. There is, however, another point of view, in which this subject presents startling truths.

If the statistics of horse-racing, in our own country alone, could be accurately digested, it would appear, that the annual cost of the system including the rental value of lands and tenements appropriate to each course: the expense of horses, servants, and agents employed; and the sums squandered in gaming, cannot fall short of many millions of dollars!! Neither can it be said that this enormous interest, or the still more enormous capital from which it flows, is thrown into circulation, both constitute a *caput mortuum*—a dead letter. The grain thus consumed; the agents employed; the lands and tenements occupied, are devoted exclusively to a withering system of monopoly: and so much of the fruits of labor are diverted from the appropriate channels of social industry and enterprize. Now, if a similar amount were annually applied to the propagation of the useful arts and sciences: to the temporal advantage of our fellow-citizens; or to the christianizing of the world, what

important changes, for the better, would ensue in the structure of our social system? Countless hosts of mechanics would then find profitable employment in their daily labor. Rail-roads would span the length and breadth of our land, and annihilate time and space in the facilities of mercantile enterprize. Steamboats would weary the navigable streams of our country, with the products of domestic industry. Agriculture would find for its golden treasures a direct, and an increased balance of trade with foreign nations. Architecture would erect the sumptuous mansions of metropolitan residence: and the proud monuments of national taste. And native science would find liberal patronage in the researches of the exact sciences, and the production of the fine-arts. Consentaneously with those improvements in the means of enjoying life, it would be fair to predict, that the moral and religious character of our people would assume a higher elevation. From the numerous colleges, and other seminaries of learning, planted in every direction throughout the union, hosts of pious and efficient evangelists would come forth to the work of the gospel ministry. The religious press, with renewed zeal, would throw off the volume of inspired truth: its most admirable comment, the book of common prayer; and the abundance of other christian literature which contains the words of eternal life. Those fleet heralds of salvation would take the wings of the morning, traverse the dreary forests of the far distant west; and find their way to the utmost isles of sea. Might not faith then anticipate the redemption of the divine promise, when all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God. (Is. 52. 10.) Then the merry peals of the church bells would call thronging multitudes to the house of prayer, in places, which not long before, re-echoed the howl of the wild beast at the sound of the emigrants axe—where “the comfortable gospel of

Christ would be truly preached, truly received and truly followed, to the breaking down of the kingdom of sin, satan, and death;" and, when, in the fulfilment of prophecy, the wilderness and the solitary place would be glad for them; and the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose—(Is. 36, 1.) But when with glowing prediction of what *might* be the religious prosperity of the country, the moralist contrasts its actually spiritual destitution, can the wonder be restrained that christians should, by any means sanction the diversion of the resources of the church and society to other than the moral interests of the people? "The elements of christianity, says an eloquent cotemporary writer, are far more deeply and intimately interwoven with the framework of our civil institutions, than is generally supposed, or is apparent to slight reflection. For the execution of civil enactments, for obedience to the constituted authorities, and for the security and happiness of society we have to look to the prevalence of a sound moral sentiment in the community. What then must result from the deterioration of public morals; from overlooking the great cardinal and conservative principles of our institutions? If the process continues, it is perfectly evident, that it may end in the subversion of all government by law, and throw society, back upon its original elements. Without attempting the proof of this statement—without reference to the genius of our institutions, and without entering upon the minute detail of their spiritual wants, take a superficial view of the great valley of the Mississippi—embracing an extent, which, with a population not more dense than that of England, could contain a fourth part of the human family, and now almost doubling its census every year—what philosophic mind can contemplate unmoved, the tremendous influence upon the whole world of the moral sentiment, fostered in the new region of human

industry and adventure." "The supply, we are told, of ministers there falls short now of the demand. Every year enhances the necessity of the one, and increases the disproportion of the other." At this alarming prospect, we are comparatively unmoved. Christians, with unconcern hear the Macedonian cry from all quarters of that beuighted land. Thousands of practical heathens within the border of our Zion, are perishing for want of the bread of life. The friend of human nature, cannot, without indignant remonstrance, compare the little pittance asked from reluctant charity, for the insufficient relief of all this spiritual necessity, with the millions annually squandered upon the indulgence of the worst passions, at a horse-race.

The next, and only other apology for the amusement necessary to be mentioned, is the assertion, that it attracts spectators, and gives impetus to monied speculations. True, it does so. But that is the very evil complained of. Gamesters do bring money to their places of resort ; but always do they take good care to carry off a great deal more. Was it ever known, that a town or community was enriched by such transient visiters ? On the contrary, are not the loose and depraved habits, then fastened, by such people, on the youth of a peaceful community, independent of the vast sums of which it is actually swindled, more than equivalent to the payment of the stranger's store or tavern bills ! There is no authority for the opinion, that a set of idle, profligate and unprincipled men, would continue the trade of iniquity, unless they found their profit in it.

This is certainly a grave and serious reflection, which commends itself to the fears of every thinking mind. Horse-racing is a public nuisance. It is an evil, which clamors for reform through popular sentiment, if not by Legislative provision ; patriotic efforts, no doubt, will be made, and christian appeals uttered, to bring about this moral

revolution. Ages, perhaps, will previously elapse ; times and seasons may roll around, before the spirit of the age shall be subdued to the christian cause ; and the pleasures of the world, find vent in the approved channels of christian intercourse. In the meanwhile, it is the duty of the christian, by every principle of interest or humanity, both in prayer, and in daily effort, to do all that in him lieth, to resist the gaming mania which threatens ruin to virtue and religion.

